

Research Paper: Finding, Evaluating, and Using Sources

Source Requirements

Annotated Bibliography: you must have between 8 – 15 sources.

Synthesis Question: you must have between 5 – 7 sources.

Research Paper: you may use the sources from the synthesis question you design (i.e. maximum 7) and must use at minimum 4 of them.

Visual sources:

Two sources must be classified as “**visual rhetoric**”. You must use at least one in the research paper you write. In the Annotated Bibliography and Synthesis Question:

- One should have a majority of non-language elements (for example, Source G, Question 1, 2008) such as drawing/illustration, photography, pictures, etc.
- One should have a majority of language elements such as words, letters, or numbers (for example, Source E, Question 1, 2008)

Primary sources:

- In your Annotated Bibliography, at minimum 5 primary sources
- In your Synthesis Question, at minimum 3 primary sources
- In your Research Paper, at minimum 1 primary source

Scholarly sources:

In your Annotated Bibliography, you must use at least one source from a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal.

Information from/about the author:

If your author is alive, you must write a letter or e-mail to the author. You must turn in proof (a copy of the letter, record of sending letter or e-mail, copy of response if you receive one) with your research paper. If your author is not alive, you must find a primary source written by or to the author and use it in your annotated bibliography.

No “tertiary” sources (i.e. encyclopedias, including Wikipedia, sites that compile “about” or general information web pages)

Media

For your Annotated Bibliography, your sources may be any type of medium.

For your Synthesis Question, your sources must be confined to those that can be reproduced on 8.5” x 11” paper.

Instructions for Annotated Bibliography

1. Must be in MLA format.
2. Must consist of at minimum 8 sources, maximum 15.
3. Specific source requirements (these may overlap; e.g. a source may be both a visual and a primary source): at least 2 visual sources, 5 primary sources, 1 scholarly source
4. For each source, you should include the citation as it will appear in the Works Cited. You will also include a paragraph about the source:
 - 1 – 2 sentences summarizing the source's main arguments
 - 1 – 2 sentences discussing the source's methodology: what mode of development does it employ? How does the source develop an argument? What is the arrangement? What techniques?
 - 1 – 2 sentences evaluating the source's authority, reliability, limitations, and scope
 - 1 – 2 sentences evaluating the source's value for your research: how it connects to issues/topics and how it could be used.
5. You should create a tentative title for your research paper and include this in the title of your Annotated Bibliography.

Advice:

Get this information for every source:

- Content: What is it about? Is it relevant to your research
- Purpose: What is it for? Why was it written/created?
- Methods used to collect data: Where did the information come from?
- Reliability: Is the information accurate? How can you verify this?
- Authority/Ethos: What expertise or authority does the author/creator have on the information?
- Currency: When was it written? Is it new? Is it of relevant currency with respect to when your source was written?
- Scope/Coverage/Limitations
- Arrangement
- Major Arguments/Points of View

Note:

- The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) requires URLs (universal resource locator; the http:// web address) for all citations. The Modern Language Association (MLA), in the 7th edition, does not. Because you are IB students, you should include the URL at the end of each citation in < >.
- Be mindful of details: formatting, spacing, punctuation, italicization, etc.
- Remember to keep the “big picture” in mind. You are doing this not just to complete one assignment (“Annotated Bibliography”), but to construct a point of view about a topic on your own. Be creative, thoughtful, and explore many options.

DUE: NEXT CLASS; grade will be included in your 2nd 9 weeks' grade (i.e. turn it in and don't be late)